

§ 32.33 Eligibility for assistance.

(a) Subject to the availability of appropriations, and the provisions of the Act and this subpart, the Bureau shall provide financial assistance to a dependent who attends a program of education at an eligible educational institution and is—

(1) The child of any Federal law enforcement officer with respect to whom PSOB benefits have been approved under subpart A of this part; or

(2) The spouse of such an officer at the time of the officer's death or on the date of the officer's totally and permanently disabling injury.

(b) The educational assistance under this subpart is intended for the sole purpose of defraying the costs of educational expenses and may only be used to defray such costs. A certification of educational use will be required.

(c) No child shall be eligible for assistance under this subpart after the child's 27th birthday, absent a finding by the Bureau of extraordinary circumstances precluding the child from pursuing a program of education, including but not limited to the death of a relative, personal injury or illness of the student, military service, or financial hardship.

(d) No dependent shall receive assistance under this subpart for a period in excess of forty-five months of full-time education or training, or a proportionate period of time for a part-time program.

§ 32.34 Application for assistance.

(a) A person seeking assistance under this subpart shall submit an application to the Bureau in such form and containing such information as the Bureau may reasonably require. The provisions of § 32.21 relating to evidence shall apply to applications under this subpart.

(b) An applicant for assistance under this subpart must establish that the Bureau previously has received and approved a claim for PSOB benefits under subpart A of this part with respect to the death or disability of the parent or spouse of the applicant.

(1) A spouse or child recognized as the beneficiary of a PSOB claim under subpart A of the part with respect to a deceased officer will be recognized as a

spouse or child for purposes of this subpart.

(2) In the case of a disabled Federal law enforcement officer approved for PSOB benefits under subpart A of this part, applicants for assistance under this subpart must submit birth or marriage certificates or other proof of relationship consistent with §§ 32.12 (spouse) and 32.13 (child), if such evidence had not been submitted with respect to the PSOB claim.

(c) The application shall describe the program of education at an eligible educational institution, and the educational expenses for which assistance is sought. A request for assistance may be for prospective assistance, for retroactive benefits pursuant to § 32.35 (if applicable), or both.

(d)(1) A request for prospective assistance must be accompanied by a certified copy of the official letter of acceptance from the eligible educational institution (on official letterhead) to the dependent, accepting the applicant into an educational program.

(2) The applicant also shall submit to the Bureau, when it is available, the schedule of classes in which the applicant is enrolled, and which must be consistent with the educational, professional, or vocational objectives stated in the application.

(e) An applicant may be represented in any proceeding before the Bureau by an attorney or other person authorized to act on behalf of the applicant pursuant to §§ 32.19 and 32.22.

§ 32.35 Retroactive benefits.

(a) Each dependent of a Federal law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty on or after May 1, 1992, shall be eligible for assistance, on the same basis and subject to the limitations of this subpart, for each month in which the dependent had pursued a program of education at an eligible educational institution.

(b) To be eligible for retroactive benefits, the applicant must submit a certified copy of transcripts from the educational institution covering the relevant time period. No application will be accepted more than five years from the last date the applicant pursued such program of education.

(c) Subject to applicable limitations, retroactive benefits shall be in addition to prospective assistance provided under this subpart. A dependent eligible for retroactive benefits may choose to waive such assistance and apply only for prospective assistance under the provisions of this subpart.

[62 FR 37716, July 15, 1997, as amended at 62 FR 39120, July 22, 1997]

§ 32.36 Action on applications for assistance.

(a) After examining the application for prospective or retroactive assistance under the provisions and limitations of this subpart, and any additional relevant information, the Bureau shall notify the dependent in writing of the approval or disapproval of the application.

(b) If the application is denied, in whole or part, the Bureau shall explain the reasons for the denial. A copy of the decision, together with information as to the right to an appeal, shall be mailed to the applicant's last known address.

§ 32.37 Determination of benefits.

(a)(1) Financial assistance under this subpart shall consist of direct payments to an eligible dependent and shall be computed on the basis set forth in 38 U.S.C. 3532.

(2) The dependent's status as a full-time, three-quarter-time, half-time, or less-than-half-time student will be determined in accordance with the requirements of, and must be certified by, the eligible educational institution.

(b) In applying the limitations under this subpart with respect to prospective assistance, the Bureau shall consider any retroactive benefits provided to the dependent pursuant to § 32.35.

(c) Benefits payable under this subpart shall be in addition to any other benefit that may be due from any other source, except that, if the FLEDA assistance in combination with other benefits would exceed the total approved costs for the applicant's program of education, the assistance under this subpart will be reduced by the amount of such excess.

§ 32.38 Denial of benefits.

(a) No benefit shall be paid under this subpart if the Bureau determines that the dependent is not eligible for, is no longer eligible for, or is not entitled to the assistance for which application is made. Without limitation, this will include circumstances in which—

(1) The benefits would exceed the applicable durational limits;

(2) A dependent child has exceeded the age limit for benefits;

(3) The dependent has failed to maintain satisfactory progress in the selected program of education as defined in § 32.32(i);

(4) The dependent is in default on any student loan obtained through Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, unless the assistance under this subpart is used for repayment of the defaulted loans and the applicant provides evidence of this fact to the Bureau in the form of an approved repayment plan; or

(5) The dependent is subject to a denial of federal benefits under 21 U.S.C. 862.

(b) The Bureau shall deny benefits under this subpart if—

(1) The educational institution attended by the dependent fails to meet a requirement for eligibility described in § 32.32(h);

(2) The dependent's enrollment in or pursuit of the selected program of education would fail to meet the criteria established in § 32.32(g); or

(3) The dependent already is qualified by previous education or training for the educational, professional or vocational objective for which the program of education is offered.

§ 32.39 Appeals.

An applicant may, within 30 days after notification of denial, submit a written appeal request to the Bureau. Appeals will be handled consistent with § 32.24 and the appendix to this part, except that such appeals shall not be handled by oral hearing but will be conducted through a record review by an administrative hearing officer. Provisions in § 32.24 and the appendix to this part relating to oral hearings shall not be applicable to appeals under this subpart.